



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment

Dedicated to protecting and improving the health and environment of the people of Colorado

Questions Submitted Prior to the Pre-Application Conference

RFA# CDPHE-2542

February 2, 2016

Q1: Is food waste within the scope of this funding opportunity?

A1: Yes

Q2: I have been working with our recycling task force, and at our latest meeting the regional recycling stakeholders requested that our next step for the region should be education materials. We have secured an in-kind match for some of these materials. Could we request grant funds for the rest?

A2: Costs for a public education and outreach campaign are eligible expenses. A project like this would fall under Tier 3 in our list of priorities, so your chances of receiving a grant award will depend on the number and quality of the Tier 1 and 2 proposals we receive. Note that if equipment and supplies to further develop the recycling infrastructure in your region were included in the project scope, along with the educational piece, it would bump the project up to Tier 2.

Q3: Can we review a previous RREO grant award contract to see some of the language?

A3: The General Provisions and Additional Provisions are available for viewing on the CDPHE website. These serve as the basis for all contracts entered into with CDPHE. Refer to [Attachment 7](#) and [Attachment 8](#) in the application documents.

Q4: Is there an RREO web page that lists the previous award winners

A4: Yes, previous award winners from as far back as FY2013 are listed on [the CDPHE website](#). A brief summary of the project and the project's final report are available for review.

Q5: We are exploring some options for recycling containers. Would these be eligible for funding?

A5: Requesting grant funds for recycling bins and dumpsters is within the scope of this funding opportunity.

Q6: A school district is looking for grants and/or partnerships that would help them purchase a food composter/dehydrator in an effort to reduce landfill waste. This is a small part of a much larger project to reduce waste district wide. Would this be eligible?

A6: The scope of this funding opportunity includes organics.

Q7: Should we receive grant funding via RREO, what claims may be held over intellectual property or other assets? May we see the General Provisions so that we can better understand what the acceptance of funds from the RREO grant entails?

A7: In regards to intellectual property, reference the General Provisions, specifically sections 9, 10, and 24, and the Additional Provisions. Both are available for viewing on the CDPHE website. In the simplest terms, if grant funds are used to purchase something tangible, the department owns that item for the life of the contract, regardless of what the item is. The department reserves this right in the event the project is terminated early so that the department can recover its initial investment in the project. In the past, this has meant we find a new buyer of the equipment through CDPHE's network of contacts or, if none can be found, we send it to auction through the Colorado State Surplus program. Should an award be given, we would be willing to meet one-on-one with legal counsel present and negotiate contract terms around intellectual property as they specifically relate to the proposed work plan and/or project budget. It is difficult for us to be specific on what claims over intellectual property may be held by the department since it largely depends on the nature of the intellectual property and how you intend to allocate grant funds in your proposed project.

Q8: We are looking into the possibility of expanding our sorting facility and installing collection bunkers. Should we combine each facet of the project under one grant proposal or submit two separate proposals?

A8: You may combine the sorting facility expansion and the collection bunkers in a single grant proposal. You may also want to consider building your proposal so that each part is a distinct budget option. In other words, Budget Option A would be all the costs associated with the sorting facility expansion, Budget Option B would be all the costs associated with the collection bunkers, and Budget Option C would be both option A and B combined. If you build your proposal in this way, it gives the review committee the option to fund one or the other or both, depending on the amount of funds we have available to award. However, if the collection bunkers wouldn't do you much good without the sorting facility expansion, you would want to make that clear in your proposal -- so that the review committee knows that, at the very least, you would need the sorting facility expansion to be funded before any of the other budget options.

Q9: We have been looking into equipment to power our facility from the scrap wood and pallets that accumulate at the landfill. We could possibly sell the power we generate to the power company, in addition to powering our own facility. Another idea is to make wood pellets and sell them to the public. Would these ideas be eligible for funding?

A9: Requesting grant funds to burn wooden pallets for energy/heat would not be an eligible project, though we would consider a project that made wood pellets out of the scrap wood and pallets.

Q10: Can CDPHE recommend grant writers?

A10: No, we are not in a position to recommend or endorse a particular service provider over another.

Q11: We are considering a Tier 2 project application. What is the funding range suggested for these applications?

A11: We don't offer a prescribed or suggested funding range. The average grant award is roughly \$110,000. The most we have ever awarded is \$933,000 and the least we have ever awarded is \$3,000.

Q12: We are considering the construction of a steel building that will be the "hub" for a regional recycling program. The building will allow for indoor storage of weather sensitive recyclable materials and will house indoor recycling equipment. We are seeking grant funds to purchase new recycling equipment that will allow for greater recycling options. We would like to purchase a vacuum system to recover carbon black from waste tires, an electromagnet to process scrap metal, household appliances, steel cans in single-stream, and waste tires, and finally a tire recycling machine. We plan to accept cardboard, paper, plastic, refrigerators, glass, e-waste, batteries, scrap metal and tires. If funded, several new public recycling drop-off centers will be established in the region. With the purchase of a tire pyrolysis machine, this will allow us to process a much larger share of waste tires throughout Colorado, and the carbon black byproduct of this process will be further recycled into other products. Would this be an eligible project?

A12: Tire pyrolysis, and any equipment, supplies, or buildings that are part of that process, would not be eligible for grant funds -- even if some of that equipment would also be used to process other types of recyclables. If you proceed with a grant proposal through RREO, the scope of your project would have to be limited to the collection, processing, and storage of recyclables such as cardboard, paper, plastic, scrap metal, and e-waste. This could be through a formal hub-and-spoke network or limited to equipment purchases or facility modifications that improve processing efficiencies and increase storage capacity. The collection and processing of waste tires as feedstock for a tire pyrolysis system and the tire pyrolysis system itself would have to be excluded from the scope. We suggest you reach out to CDPHE's [waste tire program](#) for other funding opportunities if you wish to focus on waste tires.

Q13: We would like to purchase an electromagnet to sort single stream recycling components and purchase three recyclables collection trailers to be used as drop off locations to collect aluminum, plastics and cardboard. In addition to this equipment, we also need to purchase or lease land for a new facility. Could this qualify for grant funds?

A13: Based on what you describe, this would be an eligible project and well within the scope of this funding opportunity. To answer your question on purchasing property/real estate, that is not something grant funds can be used for; however, we have funded projects that have allocated grant funds to subsidize a building lease. In these circumstances, the committee would look to the applicant to justify why grant funds are needed for this purpose and explain how the lease will be financially sustained after the grant cycle has ended.

Q14: We seek grant funds so that we can build a straining system for paint that would allow us to recover more of what comes in for recycling. We also need a can crusher to help us process all the incoming paint cans. Would this be eligible?

A14: Yes, the straining system and can crusher would be allowable expenses in your proposed grant project budget.

Q15: We are planning to conduct an analysis of several alternatives to beneficially reuse the biogas that is generated from an anaerobic digestion complex at our wastewater treatment plant. We want to initiate a study with two primary objectives: a) conduct an alternatives analysis for beneficial reuse of biogas and b) optimize the biogas production. The analysis will look into the feasibility of implementation, economic viability of the alternatives and recommend a final alternative that will then be implemented in full scale. The study will evaluate different sources of substrates such as food waste, fats oil and grease, animal waste etc. to increase biogas production and serve as a regional facility for recycling organic waste from the community. We seek grant funds to pay for professional services from a consulting engineering firm to accomplish the above project objectives. Would this be eligible?

A15: From what you describe, you would be eligible since your study would be looking at ways to capture additional materials from within the region as feedstock for your existing anaerobic digestion unit. Note that while studies are eligible, they do fall to Tier 3 in our list of priorities since our primary emphasis is on the capital costs of building out infrastructure that supports greater degrees of waste diversion. Tier 3 projects are highly dependent on the number and quality of Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects we receive.

Q16: Please explain the \$5,000 unit cost limitation for Supplies/Equipment in Attachment #4?

A16: The \$5000 unit cost figure is incorrect. We have combined supplies and equipment under a single budget category this year and the \$5000 unit cost is the threshold we used to differentiate between supplies (a unit cost of less than \$5000) and equipment (greater than \$5000). Since that distinction is no longer the case, you may disregard this number. There is not a restriction that supplies or equipment must have a per unit price of less than \$5000. Attachment #4 has been updated to reflect this change. When developing your budget table, please make sure you are using Attachment#4 with a revision date of January 28, 2016.

Q17: Can a hub utilize one of its affiliate or ancillary sites as one of its spoke locations?

A17: Yes, the applying entity who owns or operates a hub may count as a spoke that same entity's affiliate or ancillary site.

Q18: Please explain the level of retrofitting required that is needed to qualify the use of an existing hub and spoke network in a Tier 1 application? Is it enough for a Tier 1 project to meet the definition of the hub and spoke model to qualify, or does the application need to result in adding more spokes during the grant cycle? For instance, can a qualified hub and spoke network apply for equipment that builds capacity and/or process flow, allowing for increased diversion, but does not necessarily lead to expansion of the network in the next year?

A18: If an applicant submits a proposal to retrofit an existing hub in an existing hub-and-spoke network, that will qualify as a Tier 1 project as long as the existing hub-and-spoke network has a hub and at least two spokes.

Q19: If we submit multiple budget options, what parts of the application need to be duplicated?

A19: It would be best to include all your budget options in a single table, formatted using the guidelines in Attachment #4. In the budget narrative, we would look for additional explanation on the difference between the options. You may also consider whether any of the options affect the feasibility of successful implementation and expand on that within the application narrative.

Q20: We work with 50+ nonprofit organizations and I would like to apply for a grant to purchase recycling bins and pay for removal services for each of the nonprofits for one year. Would this be eligible?

A20: Taking the initiative to organize and distribute new recycling bins to 50+ nonprofit organizations all across Colorado would fall within our scope. If you decide to submit a proposal, we would look for an explanation on how recycling service would be sustained beyond the first year. The review committee would want some assurance that the recycling bins would still be used once grant funds were exhausted.

Q21: Can grant funds be used to purchase bins to collect electronics for recycling?

A21: Yes.

Q22: Can grantees be awarded a grant two years in a row?

A22: Yes, there is no prohibition on the number of times a grantee can receive a grant award; however, the advisory committee will carefully review subsequent grant proposals to determine whether the project is self-sustaining in the long-term.

Q23: Is there an in-kind or matching requirement?

A23: No, though proposals that include in-kind or matching funds will be scored more favorably.

Q24: Can grant funds be allocated to projects that are phased in over several years?

A24: No, all grant funds awarded must be spent within the 12-month grant cycle, July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

Q25: Our project will likely create a number of new jobs. What level of detail is expected when describing these jobs in our application narrative?

A25: The review committee will look at the number of full-time-equivalent positions the project will create and whether those jobs will be sustained beyond the grant cycle, after grant funds have been fully expended. A brief description of each job and how that position will either implement or sustain the project is also welcome information. If grant funds will be used to subsidize a new employee's salary, the anticipated hire date and any applicable training that will be required must be included in the project work plan.

Q26: Is this a competitive grant process?

A26: Yes. We typically receive 30-60 grant proposals and on average fund only 12 of those proposals.

Q27: We would like to implement a network of public drop-off, in-vessel composting units by collaborating with homeowner's associations and other neighborhood groups. The output from each compost unit would be consolidated at a central facility. Would this be considered a Tier 1 or Tier 2 project?

A27: This would be considered a Tier 1 project if the in-vessel composting units were considered the "spokes" and the consolidation facility was considered the "hub."

Q28: Can grant dollars be used to fund a study?

A28: Yes. If the scope of work were strictly focused on a study, this would be a Tier 3 project.

Q29: Is this funding opportunity made available every year?

A29: Yes, we are in our ninth year funding projects under the parameters of this Request for Applications. The RREO Program will exist through the year 2026, as required by state statute, and funding will continue to be allocated to the program.

Q30: Will the evaluation committee fund only specific line items in a project budget?

A30: No, the committee will only fund the project budget in its entirety as presented in the project proposal.

Q31: If requesting grant funds to cover the cost of a baler, will the applicant be required to purchase the same baler detailed in the grant application? I'm concerned that if we find a different baler that has features we need but didn't identify previously, or we find a used baler from a different manufacturer that has the same functionality, will I be required to purchase the baler in our original grant application regardless?

A31: No. In the grant application, the review committee will look for an explanation as to why a particular model was chosen. Price quotes are sufficient when estimating costs. If a different make or model is ultimately purchased after work officially begins, it will be the responsibility of the grantee to notify the grant program administrator of any changes in equipment and justify the reason for the change prior to requesting reimbursement for that equipment.

Q32: How detailed should the application be?

A32: All applicants should carefully review Section IV of the Request for Applications document titled "How to Apply" and address all questions clearly and concisely.

Q33: Will the review committee take into account whether the project will eventually be cash positive?

A33: Yes, proposals that show they are self-sustaining after grant funds are exhausted will score more favorably.

Q34: When will we know if our contract with CDPHE will be one year or three years in length?

A34: Once the review committee has selected the grant award winners, grant program staff will conduct a post-award risk assessment to determine whether CDPHE should enter into a one-year or three-year contract with each entity. Each award winner will be notified during contract negotiations.

Q35: Please describe the format of the pre-application conference.

A35: The pre-application conference is an open forum for interested applicants to ask questions directly to the committee members who will be reviewing and scoring proposals. The conference will begin with committee members reading from the list of questions asked and answered prior to the pre-application conference. Then, questions will be answered from those in the room and on the phone until all questions have been answered.

Q36: Must grant funds be used only for equipment, or can costs associated with collaboration and engaging stakeholders also be included?

A36: Yes, grant funds may be used to reserve meeting space, prepare meeting or presentation materials, and cover travel costs of project coordinators. Note that this applies to Tier 2 and Tier 3 projects only.

Q37: This Request for Applications appears very different than in years past. Has the application narrative changed?

A37: In 2016, the department instituted a new standardized Request for Applications template that all programs must now use. Rest assured the application narrative is largely unchanged. Carefully review Section IV “How to Apply” to ensure you address in your application narrative all the questions asked. Note that Attachment #9: Application Submittal Checklist is available to assist you in making sure your application is complete prior to submittal.

Q38: Is it anticipated that the entire \$1.8 million will be allocated this year?

A38: Yes.

Q39: Is each tier allocated a not-to-exceed dollar amount?

A39: No. The entire \$1.8 million may be allocated to any number of Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 projects.

Q40: What is the estimated amount of time needed to complete a grant application?

A40: It is unknown at this time. The department has not done an analysis to determine the amount of time required to complete a grant application; however, we will consider surveying grant applicants in future grant cycles to estimate time-and-effort.

Q41: Are Tier 1 projects considered first, before Tier 2 and Tier 3 projects?

A41: Yes.

Q42: We may seek grant funds to expand our existing compost facility. Is this an eligible project?

A42: Yes.

Q43: Our compost facility accepts biosolids. Does this make our proposal ineligible?

A43: No.

Q44: Must all grant funds be spent within the state fiscal year?

A44: Yes, all grant funds must be spent by June 30, 2017 even if a grantee has a three-year contract with CDPHE.

Q45: When is the earliest date a project can begin work?

A45: For any work completed or purchases made that a grantee will seek reimbursement for, July 1 is the absolute earliest date work can begin, though this is highly dependent on whether the contract is signed by all parties by July 1. The date the department's Controller signs the contract is the official project start date. The grant program will not reimburse grantees for any work completed or purchases made prior to the date when a fully executed contract or purchase order is in place.

Q46: For Tier 1 Hub-and-Spoke projects, is it required that the entity who owns or operates the "hub" facility be the applicant?

A46: No, an entity who oversees either a hub or a spoke can be the applicant for a Tier 1 Hub-and-Spoke project. Either way, it will be important for the applicant to show, via letters of commitment, that there is one hub and at least two spokes in the proposed Hub-and-Spoke network.

Q47: What is the source of funding for the RREO Grant Program?

A47: Funding is derived from a solid waste tipping fee assessed at each landfill located in Colorado. A total of \$0.14 is charged for every cubic yard of solid waste disposed.

Q48: What is the likelihood of a Tier 3 project receiving a grant award?

A48: Since FY2013, only 1% of the total grant funds awarded have been allocated to Tier 3 projects. The scoring criteria are weighted to give a greater preference for implementation projects that create jobs and build new infrastructure for waste diversion.

Q49: Can grant funds be allocated for incentives to encourage the public to participate in a new program?

A49: Yes, but it will not be looked on favorably if a sizable portion of the project budget is allocated for this purpose. Incentives cannot be cash prizes.

Q50: Are feasibility studies eligible?

A50: Yes, feasibility studies would be considered a Tier 3 project.

- END -
